

BibTeX quick reference

Entry types with their required and optional fields, escaping rules, and what biblatex adds.
Checked against the BibTeX and biblatex documentation.

CiteAnyStyle
citeanystyle.com/bibtex-generator

ENTRY TYPES AND REQUIRED FIELDS

@article	author, title, journal, year
@book	author or editor, title, publisher, year
@inproceedings	author, title, booktitle, year
@incollection	author, title, booktitle, publisher, year
@inbook	author, title, chapter or pages, publisher, year
@phdthesis	author, title, school, year
@mastersthesis	author, title, school, year
@techreport	author, title, institution, year
@misc	nothing required, so supply what you have
@online (biblatex)	author, title, year, url

A WORKED ENTRY

Journal article

```
@article{jinek2012programmable,  
  author = {Jinek, Martin and Chylinski, Krzysztof},  
  title = {{A Programmable Dual-RNA-Guided DNA  
Endonuclease}},  
  journal = {Science},  
  year = {2012},  
  volume = {337},  
  number = {6096},  
  pages = {816--821},  
  doi = {10.1126/science.1225829}  
}
```

RULES THAT PREVENT BROKEN BUILDS

Braces	Double-brace the title to keep capitals: {{CRISPR in Practice}}.
Authors	Separate with the word and, never a comma. Write Last, First.
Pages	Two hyphens make an en dash: 100--125.
Escaping	Write \& and \% and _ or the build stops.
Keys	Unique, and readable: surnameYearKeyword.
DOI	Use doi = {10.xxxx/xxxxx}, not a url field.

BIBTEX AGAINST BIBLATEX

Engine	bibtex vs biber
Web sources	@misc vs @online
Access date	note field vs urldate
Dates	year and month vs date = {2026-08-15}
Unicode	Escapes needed vs native UTF-8
New documents	Prefer biblatex with biber

CITING IN THE DOCUMENT

One source	\cite{key2026}
With a page	\cite[42]{key2026}
Several at once	\cite{keyA, keyB}
Author-year styles	\citep{} and \citet{}
Uncited but listed	\nocite{key2026}
Everything in the file	\nocite{*}

SIX MISTAKES THAT BREAK THE BUILD

- Filing a conference paper as @article.
- Leaving the title unbraced, so CRISPR becomes crispr.
- Separating authors with commas instead of and.
- An unescaped ampersand.
- Duplicate cite keys after merging libraries.
- Putting a DOI in the url field.